

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03384 151004Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 /018 W
-----065632 151203Z /43
R 150915Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
SECSTATE WASHDC 4573
USDOC WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BEIRUT 3384

ATHENS FOR RTDO

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: BTIO LE
SUBJ: GOL REQUEST FOR BIDS FOR BUSES

REF: BEIRUT 2458

1. GOL RECENTLY INVITED SEVERAL FOREIGN FIRMS, INCLUDING GENERAL MOTORS (GM), TO BID TO SELL LARGE NUMBER OF BUSES FOR BEIRUT MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM. MAY 19 BID DEADLINE EXPIRED PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF BIDS BY GM. LOCAL GM REPRESENTATIVE DAVID KASSIR TOLD US MAY 21 THAT GOL OFFICIAL HAD TELEPHONED HIM AND SAID THAT 45 DAY EXTENSION HAS BEEN APPROVED, WHEN IN FACT GOL HAD NOT GRANTED SUCH AN EXTENSION. (WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER KASSIR WAS MISINFORMED OR MISLEADING.)

2. ON JULY 8, MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AMIN BIZRI CALLED IN EMBASSY OFFICERS TO EXPLAIN PROCEDURE FOLLOWED, NOTING THAT HE HEARD THAT "CERTAIN OBSERVATIONS" HAD BEEN MADE SUGGESTING THAT GM HAD NOT RECEIVED FAIR TREATMENT. IN EXPLAINING THE PROCEDURES, HE SAID THAT GM HAD REQUESTED AN EXTENSION OF THE DEADLINE (HE SEEMED TOTALLY UNAWARE THAT GM HAD BEEN TOLD THAT THE DEADLINE HAD BEEN EXTENDED). THE GOL HAD RECEIVED A PRIOR
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REQUEST FOR EXTENSION FROM FIAT WHICH HAD BEEN REFUSED. IN THE LIGHT OF THIS, AN EXTENSION WAS NOT GRANTED TO GM. HE CONTINUED BY STATING THAT WHILE THE DEADLINE HAD PASSED, A FIRM DECISION HAD NOT BEEN MADE ON THE PROPOSALS STILL "UNDER STUDY." HE LEFT CLEAR IMPLICATION THAT, SHOULD GM AND EMBASSY STILL HAVE STRONG INTEREST IN OFFICIAL CONSIDERATION OF GM BID, SOMETHING MIGHT BE DONE.

3. BEFORE WE BURN UP OUR CREDIT WITH THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS, WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF GM INDEED IS INTERESTED OR NOT IN BIDDING TO SELL BUSES TO LEBANON. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT, WITH GM AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE IN ATHENS RATHER THAN IN BEIRUT, GM'S INTERESTS MAY BE SOMEWHAT LESS THAN OVERPOWERING. WE WOULD NOT WANT TO GO BACK TO BIZRI AND DIRECTOR OF MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION ADEL HAMIEH UNLESS WE WERE ASSURED THAT GM WOULD INDEED PROMPTLY PRESENT SERIOUS BID.

4. REQUEST ATHENS EMBASSY COMMERCIAL OFFICER CONTACT ATHENS GM REPRESENTATIVE O'KEEFE ON URGENT BASIS AND SOUND OUT DEGREE OF GM'S INTEREST IN GETTING INTO THE LEBANESE MARKET. WITHOUT PROMISING ANYTHING, PLEASE TRY TO ASCERTAIN HOW SOON, AT THE EARLIEST, GM COULD PRESENT A BID TO THE GOL AND ADVISE.
PARKER

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 15-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BEIRUT03384
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770252-0608
Format: TEL
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770755/aaaabvbm.tel
Line Count: 78
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5b63566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 BEIRUT 2458
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1853919
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOL REQUEST FOR BIDS FOR BUSES
TAGS: BTIO, LE
To: ATHENS STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5b63566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009